

To find out more about LifeRing:

Browse to www.lifering.org, the Internet voice of LifeRing Secular Recovery. Join LifeRing's **email groups** and **chat meetings**.

Books

Empowering Your Sober Self, 2nd Edition. A 277-p. introduction to LifeRing. Written for the person who wants to get free of alcohol/drugs, for their friends and relations, and for the professionals who treat them.

Recovery By Choice: Living and Enjoying Life Free of Alcohol and Drugs, A Workbook, 4th Edition. A 310-p. self-help workbook that helps you build your personal recovery program.

How Was Your Week? 2nd Edition. A 359-p. book for people who want to convene a LifeRing meeting. Essential reading for new convenors and a must for experiences convenor, who want a deeper understanding of how a LifeRing meeting works.

Buy these books at LifeRing meetings or online at www.lifering.org.

LifeRing Secular Recovery is an abstinence-based, worldwide network of individuals seeking to live in recovery from addiction to alcohol or to other non-medically indicated drugs.

In LifeRing, we offer each other peer-to-peer support in ways that encourage personal growth and continued learning through personal empowerment.

Our approach is based on developing, refining, and sharing our own personal strategies for continued abstinence and crafting a rewarding life in recovery. In short, we are sober, secular, and self-directed.

There are as many ways to live free of drugs and alcohol as there are stories of successful sober people.

LifeRing respectfully embraces what works for each individual.

LifeRing Secular Recovery
25125 Santa Clara St # E-359
Hayward, CA 94544
1-800-811-4142
service@lifering.org
www.lifering.org



Self-Help Is What We Do

To get clean and sober,
and stay that way,
empower
your Sober Self

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Self-Help Is What We Do

Recovery begins with the desire to get clean and sober. Often this desire is feeble at first, the product of harsh experience or the fear of an untimely death. But while this survival instinct may be faint and weak, it can be strengthened. Addictions are powerful, but they are not omnipotent. David defeated Goliath. We can defeat our addictions and free ourselves from them. With work and support, we can empower our best selves, our "Sober Selves," and reclaim our lives from our self-destructive using.

LifeRing recovery meetings exist to empower the Sober Self within each of us. Sometimes we do not recognize that we even have a desire for sobriety until our peers mirror it for us. Interacting with others like ourselves breaks down the hopelessness we may have felt when we tried to deal with our problem in isolation. Companionship with others in recovery kindles hope within us, and inspires us with the winning "Yes I can!" attitude.

LifeRing recovery meetings are safe places where we can let our hair down and be ourselves. They help us surmount crises in our lives without drinking or using. They are places for sober celebration of our victories. In our meetings we may come to look at ourselves in a new light. The groups are informal classrooms, where we each learn and teach what has worked to keep us sober. They are workshops where, bit by bit, we put together the elements of our personal recovery program. We encourage members to try several approaches and to master a variety of methods. We learn from each other's experiences and explorations.

We encourage sharing and cross-talk to promote supportive participation by everyone. In our meetings we may improve our social skills, deepen our empathy and develop our capacity to feel and to accept our emotions. We form bonds with other sober people. We give ourselves credit for our sober time, and applaud one another for staying clean and sober. With the support of the other participants in our groups, we turn our desire to stay clean and sober into a living reality.

At the same time, our meetings work to disempower the voice of addiction within us. We deprive our inner addict of its essential fuel by maintaining abstinence from alcohol and drugs. We try to keep the focus on our current sobriety and on our sober future instead of dwelling endlessly on our past intoxication. We choose companions who support our sobriety instead of socializing with people who will encourage us to drink or use. By such means we deflate the power of the addicted self within us.

Eventually the imbalance of power shifts within us. Our Sober Self becomes stronger than our addict self. There is an inner revolution. We become transformed from drunks and addicts who had a sober self imprisoned within us, into clean and sober people with a locked-up inner addict. We recover the Sober Self that we used to be, before addiction hijacked our systems; and we build or rebuild on that foundation, with sobriety as our priority.

Consistent with our self-help philosophy, we encourage each LifeRing participant to construct their own sobriety program. We take ownership of our recovery by deciding for ourselves what we need to do to remain abstinent. The most effective recovery program is one we freely choose. Just as there is no one way to grow up, there are many ways to achieve sobriety. We each need to find our own road to the common goal.

The LifeRing Recovery meetings and literature attempt to provide a rich and diverse selection of recovery tools. No ready-made recovery formula can fit everyone. Reinforcing motivation is more

effective than enforcing conformity. We are a support environment, not a capital-P Program. We have as many programs as we have participants. We are not a vehicle for any school of psychology. We are not disciples of any guru. We keep an open mind about the ultimate causes of addiction. Our approach is secular and unique. We know there are no panaceas. The only thing that always works is not to drink or use, no matter what.

LifeRing Recovery participation is compatible with a broad range of abstinence-based approaches. We encourage participants who feel the need for professional help to seek out medical and other treatment professionals with addiction expertise. But ultimately the best defense against relapse is for every recovering person to take responsibility for their own sobriety. Long-term progress means turning our initial desire for recovery into mastery of the art and science of keeping ourselves sober.

The basic work in any self-help group is always within ourselves. But the existence of the group enormously facilitates our inner efforts, and many of us feel grateful to the meetings and to the organization that sustains them. We feel that by helping others we are able to close and to strengthen the circle of support within which our own self-help became possible.

Some of us become enthusiastic builders of new LifeRing recovery meetings -- secular missionaries for self-help recovery. If you feel you would like to be part of this effort, please contact the LifeRing meeting and/or the LifeRing Service Center at **1.800.811.4142** or **service@lifering.org**